

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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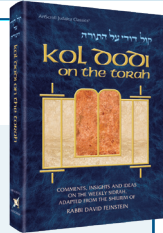
פרשת בהעלותך
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 RABBI YITZCHOK HISIGER, EDITOR
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WEEKLY INSPIRATION AND INSIGHT ADAPTED FROM CLASSIC ARTSCROLL TITLES

DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY
 L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

PARASHAH TOOLS TO SERVE HIM

Kol Dodi On the Torah by Rav David Feinstein zt"l



אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות.

Towards the front of the Menorah shall the seven flames cast light (8:2).

Rashi comments that the wicks of the six outer lamps, three on the eastern side and three on the western side, were pointed towards the central lamp. The wick of the central lamp, in turn, was pointed to the west, towards the Aron. What was the significance of this arrangement?

The Menorah represents *chochmah*, wisdom, and the seven lamps of the Menorah symbolize the seven branches of wisdom. The fact that the six outer lights were directed toward the central one, which was in turn directed toward

ALL THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF WISDOM IN THE WORLD HAVE TO BE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE SERVICE OF HASHEM.



Rav David Feinstein

the point where Hashem's Presence rested in the Mishkan, teaches that all the different forms of wisdom in the world have to be directed towards the service of Hashem. All areas of study — science, mathematics, history, law — have no independent value except to enable us to understand the Torah and know how better to perform *mitzvos*.

Mathematics, for example, should not be studied for its own sake, but only to provide us with useful tools with which to serve Hashem. In order to observe the Torah, one must know

how to measure certain quantities exactly, or how to make the computations required to establish the Jewish calendar. One could easily supply similar examples from a variety of other areas of knowledge.

The beginning of the following verse can be understood in the same light: ויעש כן אהרן, *And Aharon did so*. On an elementary level, this

means that Aharon arranged the lamps of the Menorah in the fashion that Hashem commanded. However, these words can also mean that Aharon epitomized

this ideal. He approached all of the different forms of knowledge and wisdom not as having any intrinsic interest in themselves, but rather as tools to further his service of Hashem.

Similarly, this interpretation explains why the description of the Menorah is repeated once again. By emphasizing that it was made entirely from one piece of beaten gold, the Torah stresses that, like the Menorah, wisdom should not consist of separate, unrelated branches. Rather, one's knowledge should be a cohesive unit, directed entirely toward the service of Hashem.

HASHKAFAH

THE RACE FOR MONEY

Teachings of the Abir Yaakov collected from the writing of Rav Yaakov Abuchatzzeira



NEW!

The drunken race for worldly possessions blinds people to the meaninglessness of their lives and the sorry squandering of their precious, limited time on this

earth. They cannot see the path that lies ahead of them, nor are their ears open to hear the sober warnings of their friends. If someone were to suggest that they pause for

a moment to give thought to their fate in the World to Come, they would shun this advice and con-

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ARTSCROLL PUBLISHED MONTHLY

THE RACE FOR MONEY

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tinue in their mad dash for wealth. “It’s *parnassah!* It’s a *mitzvah* for me to support my family,” they claim. Since their professions do not involve any actual *aveiros*, it is hard for them to understand what is wrong with a life devoted to amassing wealth.

There is some truth to their claim. We do, indeed, need to earn a livelihood. But why invest so much extra time and effort into gathering more and more to feed a desire that will never be satisfied?

Perhaps they might answer that no one knows what tomorrow will bring, so they have to save up extra money to provide for future catastrophes. Such thoughts rob a person of his peace of mind and set him on a path with no end to striving for more money.

In their many worries for the unlikely eventualities of this world, they forget entirely about the certain fate that awaits them in the World to Come. Had it only been an issue of Torah study, perhaps they could claim that this is justified for the sake of earning a *parnassah* (and even that only within reason). However, they pay a much greater price for their *parnassah*, as the daily prayers and basic *mitzvah* observance are also swept to the side. As a result, they fail to achieve the main purpose for which they descended into this world, which is to amass *mitzvos* and good deeds. If they waste their lives chasing money, then what basis is there to all their excuses?

Unfortunately, since so many people are swept up into the rat

race, they find encouragement in numbers. They look around them and see that such is the current with which the rivers of the world flow, and they flow along with it, convincing themselves that this is the natural and good order, and that they are doing a *mitzvah* in



HASHEM HOLDS THE KEYS TO WEALTH.

supporting their families.

Additional damage to the soul caused by this lifestyle is that it detracts from a person’s *emunah* in Hashem’s providence. There is a *mitzvah* to remember Hashem’s involvement in our lives, as we see from the verse, “*You shall remember Hashem your G-d, for He is the One Who grants you strength to succeed*” (*Devarim* 8:18). The Targum Onkelos translates this as, “*Deyahiv lach eitzah lemiknei nichsin - He gives you the idea to purchase properties.*” From here we see that our success in investments is nothing other than a gift from Hashem, Who points us in the right direction. How foolish is the notion that a person can find real success

in business, or in any aspect of life, without Hashem’s help.

Those who ignore Hashem’s *mitzvos*, setting aside Torah study and daily prayers in order to chase after wealth, show that their basic sense of *emunah* is faulty. They feel that they alone can carve the path to success, and if they fail to apply themselves with all their efforts, they will never achieve the wealth of their dreams. The truth, however, is that Hashem holds the keys to wealth. They are His to grant as He pleases, independent of human effort. Those who apply themselves to fulfilling His will through *mitzvos* and good deeds will be blessed with Heavenly assistance, far more than those who neglect His *mitzvos* and deny His intervention.

A lifestyle devoted to the pursuit of wealth makes people forget that their time on this earth is limited, and that they must prepare themselves for the great journey that lies ahead of them. They are so preoccupied with the constant distractions of monetary gain and loss that they do not stop to think about what tomorrow will bring. They do not stop to consider the worthiness of their lifestyles, or what kind of accounting they will be able to give in the World to Come.

The truth, however, is that even if there are no actual sins in their daily business (which is questionable), there are also few *mitzvos* to their credit. How do they expect to earn their place in the World to Come after wasting their precious lives in pursuit of worldly possessions? 📖



Rabbi Reuven Jacobs was born and raised in Brookline. He relates the following:

“The Bostoner Rebbe had a very profound effect on my life and the path it has taken; I clearly would have been a very different person had we never met. The *rebbe* accomplished this purely through love and example.

“My parents did not know the *rebbe*; when I was a youngster, one of my friends suggested that I go meet him. I was overwhelmed by his presence and his welcoming smile. I knew that I wanted to grow up to be like him.

“Every weekday, I rode my bike to the *rebbe*’s *shul* for *Shacharis*. I ate breakfast upstairs above the *shul*, sometimes with the *rebbe*’s *shul*, sometimes with the *rebbe*’s *shul*, and was there when the *rebbe* came in to make coffee, and then I continued on to school. In those days, the *rebbe* and *rebbe*’s *shul* lived above the *shul* and had a kitchen that was open to everyone. The door to their residence was never locked.

“At some point, someone on the school faculty asked me, ‘Why not *daven* in school and save all the time it takes to go from place to place?’ I told him about breakfast with the *rebbe*’s *shul* and coffee with the *rebbe*. He asked me, ‘How can you be a *schnorrer* (beggar) — don’t you have any pride? And what about ‘*Sonei matanos yichyeh* — One who hates gifts will live’ (Mishlei 15:27)?

“That afternoon after school, I rode my bike to the *rebbe*’s house and reported what this person had said. The *rebbe* explained that ‘*Sonei matanos yichyeh*’ applies only if you are taking and not giving. The *rebbe* said that he and the *rebbe*’s *shul* so enjoyed my daily company that I was giving them at least as much pleasure as they were giving me.

“I so much wanted to be like the *rebbe* that I was sure I knew what he would do in any situation. When we

were studying about the Civil War, my Social Studies teacher announced that she would be taking the class to a movie in a theater and that the next few classes after that would involve discussions about what we saw. I knew that the *rebbe* didn’t go to movies and I was sure I shouldn’t be going either. When I told the teacher my decision not to go, she thought that I had fallen from Mars. If an Orthodox school allowed it and

everyone was going, how could I make up my own standards and say that it was inappropriate for me? After insisting that I absolutely would not go, she explained just how easy things would be if I cooperated. I would just have to watch the movie and attend the class discussions. I didn’t even have to participate. But, if I would refuse

to go, I would have to write a ten-page report about John Calhoun.

“Who was John Calhoun? (He was the seventh vice president of the United States.) It didn’t matter. I stood my ground, knowing the *rebbe* would be proud.

“After school, I rode my bike the mile from school to the *rebbe* and told him what happened. How would I be able to write a ten-page report about someone whom I had never heard of? Where would I start?

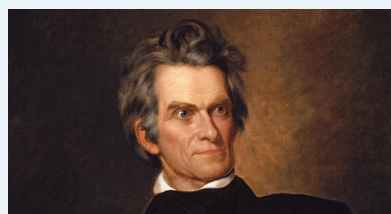
“The *rebbe* didn’t hesitate. The *rebbe* said that *we* would do the research and *we* would write the report together. In those days, many homes had invested in a twenty-volume encyclopedia which, we thought, contained all the information anyone would need to know about any subject. The *rebbe* sat down with me and we spent two hours looking up John Calhoun and related topics in the encyclopedia. The next afternoon I returned, and again the *rebbe* spent a couple of hours of research with me.

“If the *rebbe* had done nothing else for me other than help with that report, he would have won me over. But it was just one of countless favors that the *rebbe* did for me.” 📖

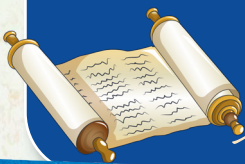
THE REBBE SAID THAT WE WOULD DO THE RESEARCH AND WE WOULD WRITE THE REPORT TOGETHER.



The Bostoner Rebbe



Vice President John Calhoun



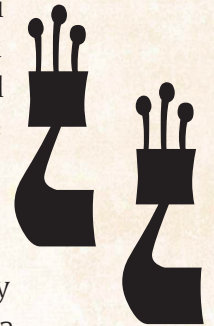
Parashah for Children

פרשת בהעלותך

Backwards!



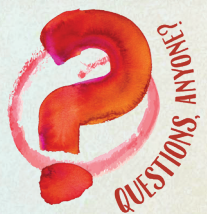
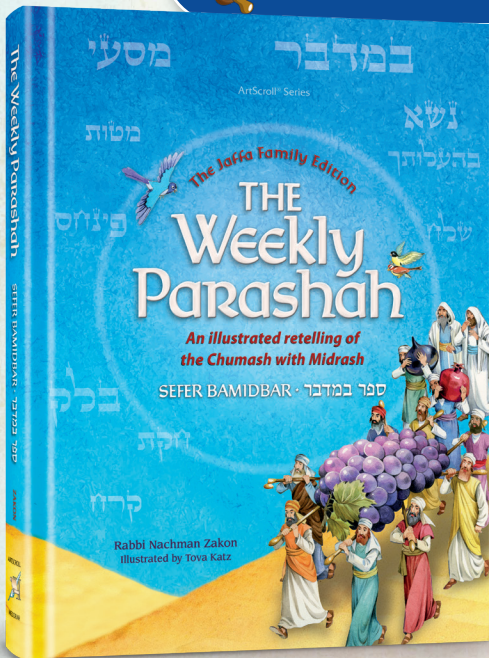
This parashah has something mysterious and unusual in it — twice, the letter “nun” appears backwards! If you open a Sefer Torah to the first pasuk of the sixth aliyah, you will see a backwards nun written before the pasuk begins. Read the next pasuk, and you will find a second backwards nun at the end of the verse. These are the only backwards nuns in the entire Torah! What’s their message?



The backwards letters are showing us that these two verses — which are the words Moshe said when they started traveling in the desert, and when they came to a stop — don’t belong here. They should have been written much earlier, at the beginning of Parashas Bamidbar. That is where the Torah first speaks about how the Jews should travel in the desert. So why are they here instead?

If these pesukim weren’t here, we would be reading in the Torah that the Jews sinned three times, one after the other! Their first sin was being happy to leave Har Sinai, so they wouldn’t get more mitzvos. Then came two other sins, which we will read about below. Three sins in a row! That would make the Jews look very bad. Hashem didn’t want that.

So Hashem broke up the sad story of the three sins. After the Torah talks about the sin of leaving Har Sinai so eagerly, we first get to read how Hashem protected the wonderful Jews who followed Him in the desert. Then the Torah tells us about the next two sins — the sins of the Misonenim and the Misavim, which we will read about soon.



How many books of Chumash are there?

That’s easy: five. That’s the right answer. But some people say that, in a way, it looks like

seven. Why? Because the two pesukim between the backwards nuns are like an entire book of Chumash on their own! So we have Sefer Bereishis, Sefer Shemos, and Sefer Vayikra. That makes three. Sefer Bamidbar, up to the first backwards nun, is counted as one book, which makes four, and the two pesukim between the nuns make another (five!). The rest of Sefer Bamidbar is another book, which makes six, and then comes Sefer Devarim — which would be seven books of Chumash!

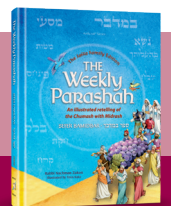
WIN A \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD!

THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Parashas Beha’aloscha:

At what age did a Levi start working in the Mishkan?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday, June 2, to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.



The winner of the Parashas Behar-Bechukosai question is: DOVI SHIMBORSKY, Jackson, NJ

The question was: Were the Jews ever exiled from Eretz Yisrael because they didn’t keep Shemittah?

The answer is: Unfortunately, yes. When the first Beis HaMikdash was destroyed and the Jews were exiled to Bavel, one reason was that they didn’t keep Shemittah or Yovel. In total, there were 70 Shemittah and Yovel years that they did not keep. That is why the exile in Bavel lasted for 70 years.